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CLAIM AMENDMENTS

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Listing of Claims:

3 What is claimed, is:

4 1. (currently amended) A method ~~Method~~ of providing index server support to a file sharing
5 application, said method comprising:

- 6 • handling requests for investigating a hierarchical structure of index servers in a network,
7 including
 - 8 • intercepting an investigation request that is directed to a remote index server, and
 - 9 • notifying an originator of the investigation request of the intercepting index server
10 identity.

11 2. (currently amended) A method ~~Method~~ according to claim 1, further comprising
12 notifying the remote index server of the intercepting index server identity.

13 3. (currently amended) A method ~~Method~~ according to claim 1 ~~or claim 2~~, further comprising
14 • accepting an investigation request as recipient,
15 • notifying an originator of the investigation request in response to the investigation
16 request.

17 4. (currently amended) A method ~~Method~~ according to claim 1, further ~~any one of the preceding~~
18 ~~claims;~~ comprising

- 19 • receiving a note from a remote intercepting index server disclosing its identity,
- 20 • registering the remote intercepting index server as child index server.

1 5. (currently amended) A method ~~Method~~ according to claim 1, further ~~any one of the preceding~~
2 claims; comprising

- 3 • sending an investigation request to a known index server,
4 • receiving a notification in response to the request.

5 6. (currently amended) A method ~~Method~~ according to claim 5, ~~further~~ comprising
6 registering the known index server as a parent index server when the known index server
7 is the originator of the received note.

8 7. (currently amended) A method ~~Method~~ according to claim 5 or claim 6, ~~further~~ comprising
9 registering the originator of the received note as parent index server when the originator
10 of the received note is not the known index server.

11 8. (currently amended) A method ~~Method~~ according to claim 5 or claim 6, ~~further~~ comprising
12 • sending an investigation request to the originator of the response when the originator of
13 the received note is not the known index server but another index server, and
14 • receiving a further notification in response to this further investigation message.

15 9. (currently amended) A method ~~Method~~ according to claim 8, ~~further~~ comprising
16 registering the originator of the further notification as parent index server.

17 10. (currently amended) A method ~~Method~~ according to ~~claim 1, further any one of the preceding~~
18 claims; comprising
19 • handling requests for querying a file as part of a file sharing application, including
20 • searching an index of the index server for a registered client that can provide the queried
21 file.

22 11. (currently amended) A method ~~Method~~ according to claim 10, comprising
23 forwarding the query to a registered child index server when the queried file is not
24 allocated to a client registered in the index.

1 12. (currently amended) A method ~~Method~~ according to claim 10 or ~~claim 11~~, comprising
2 forwarding the query to a registered parent index server when the queried file is not
3 allocated to a client registered in the index.

4 13. (currently amended) An index ~~Index~~ server, comprising
5 a control logic that is configured for performing a method as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding~~
6 claims claim 1.

7 14. (currently amended) A computer ~~Computer~~ program element comprising computer program
8 code which, when loaded in a processor unit of an index server, configures the processor unit for
9 performing a method as claimed in claim 1 ~~any one of claims 1 to 12~~.

10 15. (currently amended) A method ~~Method~~ for retrieving an index server, said method
11 comprising:
12 • sending a request for investigating a hierarchical structure of index servers in a network to a
13 known index server,
14 • receiving a notification in response to the investigation request, and
15 • registering the originator of the received note as destination for future file query requests.

16 16. (currently amended) A client ~~Client~~ computer for performing a file sharing application, said
17 client computer comprising a control logic that is configured for performing a method as claimed
18 in claim 15.

19 17. (currently amended) A computer ~~Computer~~ program element comprising computer program
20 code which, when loaded in a processor unit of a client computer, configures the processor unit
21 for performing a method as claimed in claim 15.

22 18. (currently amended) A method ~~Method~~ for retrieving an index server, said method
23 comprising:

- 1 **wherein**
- 2 • an originator sending a request for investigating a hierarchical structure of index servers in a
3 network ~~is sent~~ to a known index server;—
4 • ~~the investigation request is intercepted by the~~ a first index server that becomes aware of the
5 investigation request, intercepting said investigation request;
6 • notifying an originator of the investigation request ~~is notified~~ of the intercepting first index
7 server identity,
8 • ~~the intercepted request is dropped by~~ the intercepting index server dropping the intercepted
9 request without forwarding it to its destination, and
10 • the originator of the investigation request ~~is~~ registering the intercepting index sever as
11 addressee for file querying requests.

12

13 19. (new) An article of manufacture comprising a computer usable medium having computer
14 readable program code means embodied therein for causing provision of index server
15 support to a file sharing application, the computer readable program code means in said
16 article of manufacture comprising computer readable program code means for causing a
17 computer to effect the steps of claim 1.

18 20. (new) A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of
19 instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for retrieving an index server,
20 said method steps comprising the steps of claim 18.